



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
436th Mission Support Squadron (AMC)
Dover Air Force Base, Delaware 19902-5520

23 September 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL SUPERVISORS OF CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES

FROM: 436 MSS/DPC

SUBJECT: Supervisor's Notebook Letter # 46 – Labor Relations Responsibilities when Changing Conditions of Employment (Replaces SNL #31, 30 Jan 96)

1. Federal managers have an obligation to notify a union with exclusive recognition for a bargaining unit of employees about changes in conditions of employment and afford that union an opportunity to negotiate the change. A change in conditions of employment (COE) or change in working conditions may occur whenever management requires something new. A change in COE may be something as simple as moving a water cooler to another location, or something as complex as changing the traffic flow on a street. The requirement to notify a union is contained in, Title 5 USC, Chapter 71. In many instances, the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) covers procedures for making changes to COEs. The following procedures and attached flow chart outline the process whenever you're planning or contemplating a change to COEs that may affect bargaining unit employees:

- a. Always review the CBA, and then notify the Union (usually that's a union steward) before making any COE change. Rule: "When in doubt—notify!" That ensures compliance with federal law and helps prevent unnecessary unfair labor practice (ULP) charges against Dover AFB.
 - b. Provide the Union representative with a written memo of what you know about the potential change. Ask the Union representative for input. If the Union representative doesn't have any input, then ask for a negative response. This will document a closure for the record and allow the change to be implemented according to the way it was originally explained to the Union representative. If the change evolves into something else, you must go back to the Union representative with the additional information, and again document it.
 - c. If the Union representative provides comments or proposals, contact 436 MSS/DPCE at X4645 for assistance. Our staff will help you with any negotiations and try to find ways of expediting the process so that the change in COE may proceed.
2. Just as changes in COE shouldn't be arbitrary on management's part, any union proposal to indefinitely postpone a change, or proposal to not to make the change at all is not considered valid. Many union representatives have ideas that can help reduce costs to the taxpayer, increase productivity, and improve customer service. These procedures help to ensure that those ideas get conveyed whenever there are changes to COE.


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Attachment:
Flow Chart

CHANGING CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT (COE)

